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Why Humanitarian Interventions Succeed or Fail

The Role of Local Participation

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ABSTRACT

Why do interstate interventions, even when carried out with the best of intentions, so often fail to contain conflicts and support a peaceful settlement? We argue that the extent of local participation exerts a strong effect on the prospects for successful peace-building and reconstruction efforts in the wake of humanitarian interventions. Even though the population in target countries may sympathize with the goal of the intervention, local populations are unlikely to feel a personal attachment to a solution externally imposed unless actively consulted or involved in the intervention strategy. Humanitarian interventions without some form of local participation are likely to create cognitive dissonance among the local population between the outcome and the means chosen to implement it. We evaluate our hypotheses about the relationship between local involvement and successful post-conflict reconstruction by looking at variation in conflict and local involvement over time in two humanitarian interventions, Bosnia (1991–95) and Somalia (1987–97). Consistent with our hypotheses about how lack of local involvement can undermine post-conflict reconstruction efforts in the wake of interventions, we find that phases with more local involvement are associated with lower levels of conflict.

Keywords: Bosnia; cognitive dissonance; conflict resolution; humanitarian intervention; Somalia

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, the international community has on numerous occasions pondered or carried out armed interventions within sovereign states to address humanitarian contingencies such as genocide or severe civil conflicts. Despite good intentions, interstate interventions rarely succeed in establishing permanent solutions to conflicts and humanitarian crises within states (see Weiss, 1999; Weiss and Collins, 2000; Regan, 2000).

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In this article, we develop one explanation for why humanitarian interventions so often fail. We argue that the failure to consult or actively integrate local parties in target countries during the peace-building process can create problems of cognitive dissonance in humanitarian interventions: a population that is largely uninvolved in a humanitarian intervention is less likely to cooperate with the intervening parties or expend efforts to make the intervention successful. Whereas individuals positively value things they have strived hard to achieve, they are less likely to feel any attachment to or responsibility for initiatives or outcomes that are seen as externally imposed.

We begin with a brief overview of the idea of humanitarian interventions and their increasing salience in international affairs. We then outline how the failure to involve local populations may lead to an adverse relationship between interveners and target populations that can undermine humanitarian interventions. We provide an empirical evaluation of our argument by looking at how variation in local involvement in two humanitarian interventions, Bosnia (1991–95) and Somalia (1987–97), is associated with differences in the variation in conflict and stability. We find that phases in the peace-building process with high local participation are associated with lower levels of hostility, while phases with little local involvement tend to be associated with escalating violence. On a constructive note, our research points to various implications for how peace-building efforts should be designed after the military component of an intervention has been completed to increase the prospects for stable peace and successful conflict settlement. In the final section we discuss some of the key policy implications as well as a framework for identifying local population involvement in broader, comparative tests of humanitarian interventions.

Humanitarian Interventions in Contemporary International Politics

Despite international norms of non-intervention in the internal affairs of sovereign states, external interventions are by no means a new phenomenon in international politics. The end of the Cold War, however, appears to have fundamentally changed the motivations for interventions in other states. Where states traditionally have intervened in the affairs of other states to defend either their strategic or private interests, humanitarian concerns, such as preventing human suffering in severe civil wars, have increasingly become cited as a rationale for involvement in other states (e.g. Kosovo, Bosnia, East Timor, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Somalia). Interventions in the domestic affairs of failed states are often regarded as acceptable under international law if they are designed to address human rights violations and human suffering. Following the Kosovo crisis, for example, the Clinton administration developed a doctrine advocating that the USA should actively intervene to prevent human rights abuses provided it could do so without significant casualties.[1] This shift is reflected in

numerous United Nations (UN) Security Council resolutions and attempts to redefine the role of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) from a defensive alliance to a peace-keeping/peace-making organization. As the end of the Cold War diminished the strategic competition between the major powers in international politics, the atrocities in civil wars during the 1990s stimulated demands for stronger human rights protection in international law and limits to state sovereignty (see Weiss and Collins, 2000: 34).

Although some researchers have questioned whether the humanitarian justification of interventions is a mere guise for other less altruistic motives (see, e.g., Gibbs, 1997), we do not see clear immediate benefits to intervening countries in most cases of interventions that are justified on humanitarian grounds. We assume that the humanitarian concerns and motives expressed by intervening countries are sincere and that their main objective is to prevent or limit severe humanitarian crises such as prolonged civil wars or genocides (see also Regan, 2000). Although the question of why and when states may be willing to intervene to address humanitarian crises is of great interest in and of itself (see, e.g., Hermann and Kegley, 2001), we take decisions to engage in humanitarian interventions as given. Our main interest lies in providing an alternative causal explanation of why humanitarian interventions often fail, thus affecting the prospects of a successful settlement.

Perceived Failures of Humanitarian Interventions: Why Local Involvement Matters

There are frustratingly few cases where humanitarian interventions have clearly succeeded in addressing the conditions motivating the interventions. The optimism that might be conveyed by relatively successful stories such as Haiti and East Timor (albeit of short duration) is tempered by a list of cases perceived as disastrous failures such as Somalia. In many other cases, such as Kosovo and Bosnia, peace-keeping operations missions may have brought about an end to fighting, but the success in reaching the stated long-term objectives of the intervention seems mixed at best.

Humanitarian interventions might appear ineffective in securing human rights and building a stable peace, but simply asserting that humanitarian interventions often do not work tells us little about why humanitarian interventions so often fail and whether peace-building efforts may have more prospects for success under some conditions. There are many possible reasons why complicated and ambitious efforts to create peace through humanitarian interventions fail. It is often argued, for example, that lack of willingness of the interveners to pay significant costs and an extreme aversion to casualties lead to half-baked efforts at peace-keeping on the cheap that may be insufficient to create successful peace-building (see, e.g., Mueller, 2000).

We do not argue that the above-mentioned factors do not matter for the prospects for successful peace-making interventions, but wish to highlight the important role of local participation for successful peace-building. After

the short-term goals of humanitarian interventions (such as containing direct violence or securing food supplies) are met, intervening countries face the greater challenge of meeting long-term goals of successful conflict resolution or guarantees for a stable peace. We argue that the latter type of goals will often require a more enduring commitment to a country or region as well as some degree of active involvement of or support from the local population.

We use cognitive dissonance theory to assess local populations' need to be actively involved in post-conflict reconstruction efforts in order for them to significantly value the efforts or outcomes of any power-sharing measures and institution-building measures. We define as local participation policies that include recognition of all sides in the conflict as legitimate parties, committed efforts in peace-building, i.e. observing and training for elections, decommissioning weapons, training police and security forces, and assisting local parties in establishing institutions.[2] In our definition of local participation we do not include the supply of military assistance to the opposing parties, as the increase in armaments can only fuel and prolong the conflict.

Existing research makes it clear that developing local capacity to sustain peace involves great challenges, and suggests that strategies that seem effective at the initial military phase of interventions often may prove counterproductive for the long-term goals. Minear and Weiss (1993) argue that externally provided aid and relief often fuels further conflict, as combatants compete for rents and abuse the available funds to finance continued domestic conflict. Time and resource constraints often prevent the intervening parties from developing long-term strategies for conflict settlement, and often give rise to short-term strategies that breed dependency among the local population and frequently are detrimental to a country's long-term recovery. In the aftermath of a military intervention, the intervening states and their military agencies cease to be the sole relevant actors. International organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) typically come to play an important part that complements the purely military component of the interventions (see Duffield and Prendergast, 1994).

In an analysis of 123 interventions from 1944–98 based on the Doyle and Sambanis (2000) data, Gizelis and Kosek (2003) have indeed shown that more integrative intervention strategies involving the UN are more likely to lead to successful settlements. This is consistent with the idea that interventions that are seen as legitimate by the local actors and more often involve local populations are more likely to be met with success. Availability of global resources gives the UN an advantage over NGOs and states in identifying and involving groups that can motivate local participation and support.

At the outset of peace-building efforts, progress on short-term security issues requires coordination between military parties that can help contain conflict and civilian agencies that address non-military aspects of humanitarian crises, such as immediate relief and supplies. In the long run, however, external assistance by itself is not enough, and successful

peace-building must develop meaningful cooperation with local parties. Whereas NGOs may be independent agencies in the sense that they are not part of the military agencies that carry out the external interventions, they nonetheless typically lack a local organizational base or representation. Relief workers aiming at saving lives in acute humanitarian emergencies usually have little time to acquaint themselves with local culture and habits (Minear and Weiss, 1993: 33). Pre-existing local institutions, structures and traditions are usually ignored in failing states, and NGOs fail to capitalize on opportunities to incorporate locals into relief work (Weiss and Collins, 2000: 137). As criticism of host governments can make relief work more difficult, NGOs engaged in relief work have also tended to avoid anything that can be seen as lack of impartiality or involvement in local political affairs, and often remain silent or overlook human rights violations. This status quo orientation can often make significant segments of local populations more sceptical of the intervening parties and less likely to cooperate or comply with conflict resolution efforts.

Successful settlement and conflict resolution requires a level of participation by local actors in the peace-building process that intervening parties have rarely managed to foster, as attested by the two cases we will focus on later, namely Somalia and Bosnia-Herzegovina (Bosnia). According to Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance, consistency with one's beliefs and actions is a key motivator of human conduct. When an individual perceives dissonance or a conflict between his or her attitudes and actions, the individual is likely to feel discomfort and seek ways to eliminate the dissonance between beliefs and behaviour. Dissonance can be eliminated either by reducing the importance of the conflicting beliefs or by altering the conflicting behaviour (Griffin, 1997). It is generally much harder to change actual behaviour than beliefs. That is, when faced with a conflict between beliefs and behaviour, individuals eliminate cognitive dissonance by finding a justification to reconcile the apparent conflict between stated values and their actual behaviour.[3]

Aronson (1969) argues that the inconsistency between beliefs and actions is not logical, but psychological. The amount of effort individuals invest in an activity proportionally affects the level of dissonance developed. In other words, if we invest time and effort to accomplish a task, our attitude changes to justify the behaviour.[4] This is also related to the hypothesis that personal responsibility over a future bad outcome is the greatest predictor of dissonance. When individuals perceive that they have a choice to make regarding future actions dissonance can be created. If there is no perceived choice, then without personal accountability dissonance is low and individuals have no incentive to alter their attitudes (Bern, 1967; Aronson, 1969, 1992; Wicklund and Brehm, 1976). Moreover, cognitive dissonance is also related to group interactions. If individuals think in terms of a collective reference group, then group conformity will impose consistent attitudes on the individual members.

Although the theoretical formation of cognitive dissonance emphasizes processes at the individual level (Festinger, 1957; Aronson, 1969), such mechanisms have many observable implications manifesting themselves at

the level of collective outcomes. Although it is difficult to observe individual beliefs and how they motivate individual action, we can observe how hypothesized individual attitudes and responses to a situation will be reflected within a group context. Empirical and experimental studies in social psychology suggest that external actors can influence and motivate foreign cultures by inviting influential figures from the in-groups to participate in the decision-making process. Hernandez and Iyengar (2001), for example, claim that the identity of the influencing agent with respect to the group is essential to motivate individuals to fulfil their duties and social obligations. They suggest that individuals respond more to authority figures from within the group than outsiders, even when those outsiders are construed as benevolent. Others have shown that individuals tend to adjust to their environment if the outcome or decision-making processes giving rise to prevailing conditions are construed as contextually appropriate to the social and cultural reality of the local population (see Heine, 1997; Hong and Chiu, 2001).

Dissonance theory, thus, can be applied to analyse the impact of humanitarian interventions on the local populations and their response to the intervention and the post-conflict reconstruction process. Dissonance theory suggests that the failure to include the local population and elites who have wide appeal within the local communities in intervention strategies often may undermine the effectiveness of peacemaking efforts. Hence, the theory suggests that if the local population is involved in the reconstruction process and perceives that it can shape the final outcome of the intervention, a possible failure of the intervention will create strong dissonance. Dissonance among the locals could be counterweighed by having them actively contribute to the reconstruction process. The more the local population contributes to efforts to rebuild civil society and create stable institutions, the more they will value the outcome of a peaceful and successful settlement. Likewise, if locals perceive that their input in the reconstruction process is minimal or the new institutions are inappropriate to their social and cultural reality, they are likely to regard the failure of humanitarian interventions as inevitable. Under such circumstances, the recurrence of violence will loom over attempts to build institutions that are not sustainable without the presence of external forces.

Our main interest revolves around how efforts by external agents (e.g. NGOs, IGOs and other states) to involve locals to participate in the conflict resolution process can enhance their motivation to strive for a successful settlement and thereby increase the effectiveness of humanitarian interventions.[5] We can derive two testable hypotheses from cognitive dissonance theory which highlight how the relationship and dynamics between intervening and targeted parties in humanitarian interventions shape the prospects for success.

H1: The more time and effort the local population invests in peace-building operations the higher the likelihood that a humanitarian intervention will succeed.

H2: The more the local population becomes accountable for reconstruction efforts, the higher the likelihood that a humanitarian intervention will succeed.

The application of cognitive dissonance in humanitarian interventions is also consistent with common claims in the literature on commitment (Fearon, 1998; Lake and Rothchild, 1998). The more committed external actors are to the process, whether states or IGOs and NGOs, the level of investment and efforts by the locals increases proportionally, which thereby would create a high level of dissonance should their efforts fail. The higher level of dissonance acts to directly motivate the locals, who become invested in the success of the reconstruction process. Instead, in cases like Somalia, the hastened departure of the US forces amid increasing violence left the local population passive bystanders in the peace-building process and created widespread perceptions of external actors as the 'real enemy' of the local population. Hence, we can formulate the following hypothesis regarding the role of external actors:

H3: The more committed external actors are in the process of humanitarian intervention, the higher the likelihood that the local population will embrace the reconstruction process.

Testing Hypotheses on Participation and Successful Resolution: Somalia and Bosnia

It is difficult to observe and measure whether the local population's beliefs and attitudes change in response to specific policies by the intervening parties; we can, however, observe levels of violence and cooperation in a given time period, a behavioural manifestation of how locals interact with each other and the interveners. Moreover, there are no available indicators of the participation of local populations in humanitarian interventions. Hence, we decide to examine two case studies and try to assess the argument presented in this article. The analysis of the two cases allows us to identify the kind of policies of the intervening parties that seem to gain support from local actors.

We examine two cases of interventions in the 1990s, namely Bosnia and Somalia. Somalia and Bosnia may seem unlikely cases to compare based on the characteristics of the countries as such, but both provide examples of the range of humanitarian interventions in the early 1990s. In each case, the decision to intervene was based on the view that force was required to end the physical suffering of civilians and help foster peace and stability (Parekh, 1997: 53).[6]

If we consider the two cases over time, Somalia and Bosnia show considerable variation in conflict and local involvement in different phases of the conflicts. Although Somalia has been a clear-cut case of a failure, Bosnia can be characterized as a mixed success, in particular after August of 1995, when peace-building efforts have been more successful. Whereas local participation and cooperation with domestic parties remains consistently low in

Somalia, Bosnia shows considerable variation in degree of local participation over time. Contrary to common perceptions of the former Yugoslav republic as a failure for international peace-building efforts since August of 1995, Bosnia has been close to a success story with respect to the possibility of peace-building through humanitarian intervention.

Table 1 gives a stylized overview of the cases of Somalia and Bosnia. For each column or overall conflict phase, we identify whether there was any cooperation between the military and civilian components of the intervention, and whether the local population was involved in the peace-building process. We then examine whether these differences in policies are associated with differences in the overall conflict or incidents of violence. Although it is difficult to observe and measure whether individual beliefs and attitudes change in the manner that cognitive dissonance theory holds, we can observe how such changes in attitudes among the local population are manifested in incidents of violence and cooperation (behavior). We use the monthly incidents of violence and cooperation as an indicator of the local population's attitude towards the process of the intervention. Similarly, we use incidents of cooperation and conflict to capture the attitudes of the intervening parties towards the locals and identify any trends of cooperation or conflict. If our hypotheses are correct, we can expect to

TABLE 1

	Somalia	Bosnia 1 (1992–95)	Bosnia 2 (August 1995)
Did a military and a humanitarian operation simultaneously take place?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Was there any cooperation between the military and the civilian component of the operation?	Yes	No	Yes
At what level did they cooperate?	Minimally	Not at all	Extensively
Did the external actors bring in local representatives?	Partially yes[1]	Yes	Yes
Did the external actors consistently enforce their policies for at least 2 years?	No	No	Yes
Did they take sides?	Yes	Neutral	Government
Did the intervening parties and the local authorities reach an agreement which included future plans for development?	No	No	Yes
Was any major power leading the operation?	Yes	Yes	Yes

[1] On two occasions, Ethiopia — under the auspices of the UN — attempted to mediate in the conflict. Since 1993 there have been several attempts to bring the different groups to the negotiation table. Yet none of the efforts provided measurable results in terms of data.

observe lower levels of total conflict in the periods that had a greater local involvement in peace-building efforts.

In examining the level of conflict in the two cases, we look at the event data for each. Goldstein and Pevehouse (1997) have collected event data for a series of regional coding, based on automated coding of Reuters news reports (for an analysis of their data from Bosnia, see Goldstein and Pevehouse, 1997). Each newspaper report is coded as an event based on the action that a reported actor takes toward a particular target. The specific actions taken are classified using the World Event Interaction Survey (WEIS) event data categories as more general types of events. Although the original WEIS categories are nominal, Goldstein (1992) has devised a scaling method that assigns each WEIS event category a conflict-cooperation score between –10 and 10. A value of –10 indicates the most extreme case of conflictual event (i.e. military attacks and declarations of war), whereas values closer to 10 indicate more cooperative actions, such as granting aid or assistance.

Studies using event data usually aggregate the total number of events over some time period to create a conflict-cooperation time series. Event data studies usually look at dyadic interactions to examine how one party responds to the actions of another party. In this study, however, our interest is to examine how humanitarian interventions and efforts to incorporate the local population in the peace-building process influence overall levels of conflict, so we aggregate over all actors in each conflict. The daily event data series is very jagged and has multiple spikes, as some days have many events and some have none. We aggregate over each one month period to get a more stable measure of the overall level of conflict. To summarize, our conflict measure is the sum of all the Goldstein scores for all events in a conflict in a particular month, with lower values indicating more intense conflict. Figures 1 and 2 show the conflict-cooperation level for Somalia and Bosnia, respectively.

In the next section we narrate the main features of our two interventions, Somalia and Bosnia, with special emphasis on the extent and lack of local involvement. We then examine how these differences in local involvement predict variation in overall conflict and cooperation.[7]

Somalia

Somalia is an ethnically and linguistically unified country, which is divided along clan lines rather than along ethnic and/or religious groups. Since 1992, when widespread conflict and food shortages motivated an international intervention, Somalia has remained a failed state, without a functional state government or central authority. Somalia is perhaps the most notorious failed interstate intervention, in the sense that the intervention has failed in creating power-sharing mechanisms that could accommodate the different clans and foster cooperation.

In Somalia, the intervening forces quickly became engulfed in factional violence instead of facilitating conflict resolution and management efforts based on traditional inter-clan mechanisms. The role of the USA was even

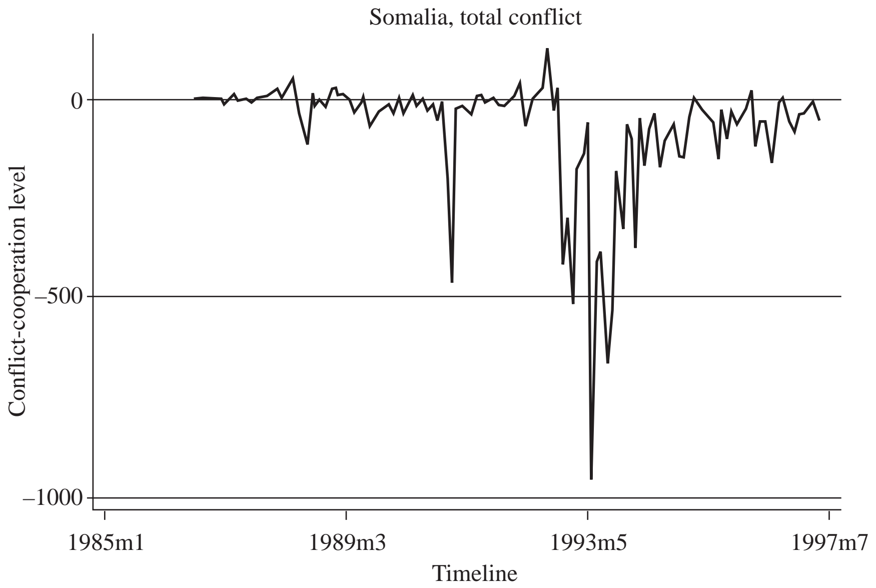

FIGURE 1
Somalia, Conflict and Cooperation Levels

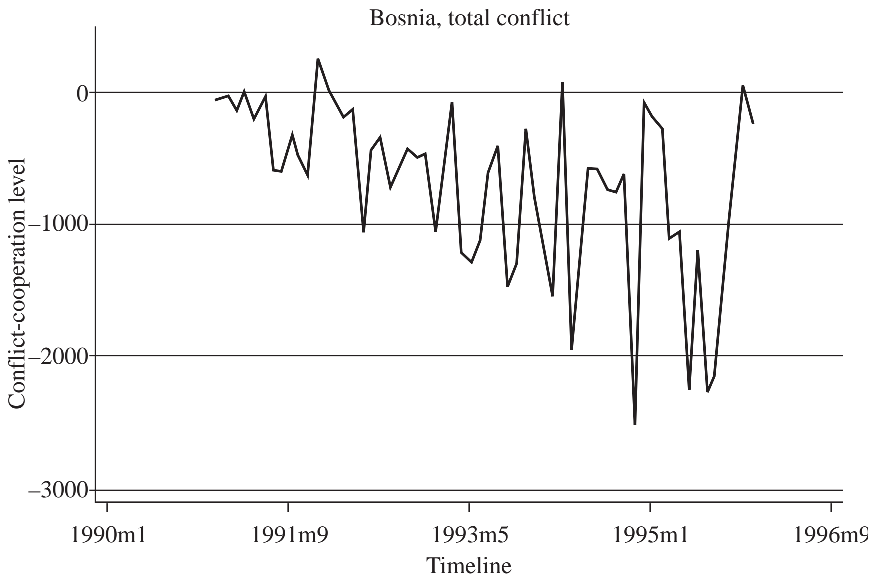

FIGURE 2
Bosnia, Conflict and Cooperation Levels

more counterproductive, as they clearly took sides against the clan of the warlord Aideed (also spelled Aydid) in the second part of 1993. Given the structure of the Somali clan system, the biased line at the outset was highly detrimental to achieving cooperation between clans and local factions. In the last phase of the intervention (UNOSOM II), the United States refused to recognize Aideed as a local leader, but instead tried to arrest him for his role in the death of 24 Pakistani UN peace-keepers. The targeting of Aideed generated increasing hostility to the intervention forces, which reached a climax on 3 October 1993 with the death of 18 Americans and hundreds of Somalis. This is reflected in Figure 1 by a dramatic negative spike in the level of conflict. The ambush of a patrol of US rangers by forces loyal to Aideed led to a reversal in the American policy on Somalia, where troops were withdrawn. Eventually, most other UN troops and personnel were also called back (see Weiss, 1999: 90).

Figure 1 illustrates how intervention in Somalia failed to bring an end to the conflict, but instead produced a negative trend toward greater levels of violence. Since the failure of the military component of the humanitarian intervention in 1993, the UN and neighbouring Ethiopia have launched several efforts to promote peace negotiations and power-sharing among the Somali clans. Invariably, these efforts have failed. The main problem with the current power-sharing plans in Somalia is that they do not take into account the segmented clan system of Somalia, which divides the Somali society along lines similar to ethnic and religious divisions. Although mechanisms of conflict resolution traditionally have existed among the different clans, the civil war and its ramifications have largely destroyed these networks, thereby rendering peace-making attempts much more difficult (Farah, 2003).

The humanitarian intervention in Somalia exacerbated divisions among local factions. As many locals came to perceive the intervention as illegitimate, they had little interest in participating in the peace-building efforts. In the language of cognitive dissonance theory, the Somalis did not develop a vested interest in the outcome of the humanitarian intervention, but remained aloof observers, as suggested by H1 and H2. There were never meaningful efforts to make them active participants in the peace-building process by the intervening parties, which could have helped make them more accountable for securing a peaceful settlement and maintaining efforts to contain violence.

Our criteria for local participation in Table 1 help identify some of the sources of problems in Somalia. First, the cooperation between the civilian and the military component of the humanitarian intervention was lukewarm at best, creating inconsistencies between short-term actions and measures to reach long-term goals. Although Operation Restore Hope was motivated by facilitating the distribution of humanitarian aid in Somalia, American soldiers were not allowed to directly participate in food distribution (see Weiss (1999) on cooperation problems between the civilian and the military component of the Somalian intervention). Second, no agreement was ever reached between the intervening parties and the local population during the intervention. The US-led Operation Restoration Hope

(also known as Unified Task Force) had evolved into UNOSOM II, the first UN military intervention without the prior consent of the local state authorities. The low level of commitment among locals became reflected in the attitudes of the local population, who treated the intervening parties as illegitimate interveners, alien to local culture and political life. Third, the intervening parties followed inconsistent policies, with ever-changing objectives as to the goals of the operation and decommissioning. Inconsistent policies and lack of commitment led to lower levels of involvement by the local population as well; an outcome consistent with H3.

UNOSOM I initially succeeded in bringing starvation under control, consistent with the initial goals of the operation, and the warlords appeared to be ready to negotiate (see Figure I, where the values of the Goldstein score for some periods even reach positive values). The operation took a different course with the new Clinton administration in 1993. While the initial operation was strictly humanitarian in purpose, the Clinton administration expanded the original mandate to include policing and governance; even though the official policy was that the United States could not tolerate casualties. Moreover, it was unclear whether Somalia should be under UN trusteeship or negotiations with local authorities, including in some cases the warlords, should be fostered. The solution of trusteeship was vehemently rejected by the other African countries as reminiscent of colonialism (Menkhaus and Ortmayer, 1995: 10–12). The conflicting policies transformed the US-led Operation Restore Hope into a hunt for warlords in Mogadishu and destroyed any prospects for a peaceful settlement in the critical time of summer of 1993 (Weiss and Collins, 2000: 83–4).[8]

We can evaluate the differences in level of conflict more formally by comparing the mean of the Goldstein conflict and cooperation score for four different time periods from 1991 until 1997. We created the four periods based on specific events that marked the process of the intervention. As Tables 2–5 clearly show there is an increase in violence during the first phase of the militarized interstate intervention. Although the levels of violence decline after the departure of the US forces in early 1994, the Goldstein score of conflict for the period 1994–7 remains lower (–68.059) than the period prior to UN and US intervention. The mean is –20.060 for the year before the launch of UNOSOM I in 1991. Thus, the militarized intervention, an operation antagonistic to the local leaders, in this case seems to have led to higher levels of violence rather than greater cooperation.

Somalia 1987–97

TABLE 2
Goldstein score of conflict events, Somalia, 1991–92

Variable	Time periods	Mean	Standard deviation
Goldstein conflict and cooperation	72	–20.060	82.126

TABLE 3
Goldstein score of conflict events, Somalia, 01/1992–10/1993

Variable	Time periods	Mean	Standard deviation
Goldstein conflict and cooperation score	9	–399.689	284.874

TABLE 4
Goldstein score of conflict events, Somalia, 11/1993–12/1993

Variable	Time periods	Mean	Standard deviation
Goldstein conflict and cooperation score	3	–358.567	202.421

TABLE 5
Goldstein score of conflict events, Somalia, 01/1994–07/1997

Variable	Time periods	Mean	Standard deviation
Goldstein conflict and cooperation score	41	–68.059	71.990

In sum, these results support our contention that the effects of any integrative attempts by the UN were cancelled by the policy choice of the military component of the intervention to take sides against powerful clan leaders. In the end, the local population came not to value the humanitarian intervention as a worthy cause to support, despite its positive aspirations. Dissonance developed among the local population, as there was no feeling of responsibility over the final outcome of the humanitarian intervention and its possible success in building a stable peace. Our argument suggests that as the Somalis did not engage in any meaningful cooperation with the efforts of the intervening parties, the local population became less likely to endorse the goals of the international intervention or see any value in their efforts to build a peaceful settlement.

Bosnia-Herzegovina

After the collapse of Yugoslavia as a state, the Vance–Owen plan, introduced in the period 1992–3 to contain the conflict in Bosnia, entailed one of

the most detailed plans of power-sharing constructed by external mediators. The Vance–Owen plan tried to address shared power management in an area where the three religious groups were demographically intermingled. The basic outline of the plan was based on the demographic realities of Bosnia-Herzegovina and envisioned a weak central government and a national legislation based on strict proportionality; however, it failed to enhance a peaceful resolution as it ultimately was rejected by the Bosnian Serb parliament. The Vance–Owen plan failed as the two principal negotiators lacked influence with or leverage over the hardliners. The end of the Vance–Owen plan efforts led to increased violence, as both the Serbs and the Croats attempted to achieve their territorial aspirations through military force. Figure 2 and Tables 6–7 illustrate that at the early stages of the civil war in Bosnia the failed humanitarian intervention led to a continuous increase in levels of conflict. Figure 2 shows a steady increase in monthly violent incidents from June of 1992 until December of 1995.

Similarly, comparison of the monthly aggregated conflict incidents over the period 1991–5 shows that since the onset of the conflict and despite a fully developed peace-keeping operation, the levels of conflict were continuously increasing (see Tables 6 and 7). If we compare the Goldstein score of conflict from 1991 to December of 1993, there is an increase in the monthly levels of conflict.

The attempts by the external actors to keep as neutral a position as possible during the first stages of the intervention in Bosnia failed, as severe problems of coordination between the civilian and the military component of the intervention plagued the peace-making efforts. During the first three

Bosnia (1991–96)

TABLE 6
Goldstein score of conflict events, Bosnia, 1991–12/1991

Variable	Time periods	Mean	Standard deviation
Goldstein conflict and cooperation score	12	–252.567	295.188

TABLE 7
Goldstein score of conflict events, Bosnia, 01/1992–12/1993

Variable	Time periods	Mean	Standard deviation
Goldstein conflict and cooperation score	24	–635.183	445.136

TABLE 8
Goldstein score of conflict events, Bosnia, 01/1994–12/1994

Variable	Time periods	Mean	Standard deviation
Goldstein conflict and cooperation score	12	–984.408	753.863

TABLE 9
Goldstein score of conflict events, Bosnia, 01/1995–08/1995

Variable	Time periods	Mean	Standard deviation
Goldstein conflict and cooperation score	8	–1320.113	835.396

years of the humanitarian intervention, the political differences among the leading intervening countries, notably the United States and European Union countries, deepened over the political goals of the intervention and how military force should be applied. The lack of coordination and effective measures created conditions where UN peace-keeping forces often found themselves under direct attack. In spring of 1995, for example, 325 French peace-keepers were taken hostage by the Bosnian Serbs and used as human shields during the NATO bombing campaign. The escalation of the conflict is reflected in the downward trend in Figure 2 and the large spike in conflict from March 1995 to August 1995. NATO air strikes led to an even further increase in levels of violence (see Table 8 and especially Table 9, where the mean of the Goldstein score of conflict and cooperation peaks at –1320.113 from –984.408 in the previous period in Table 8).

The final NATO campaign (August 1995) and the military advancement of the Croats forced Bosnian Serbs to accept the negotiations in Dayton, Ohio in November 1995. The nature of the intervention in Bosnia fundamentally changed beginning in August of 1995. First of all, the five contact group countries[9] that led the operation appeared to be more committed in their decision to enforce the conditions of the Dayton agreement, which later became the Treaty of Paris (consistent with hypothesis 3). Second, and most critical to our main argument, the Dayton agreement gave the Bosnian Serbs an almost autonomous status overtly recognizing the different religious groups, something that was not included in the Vance–Owen plan (consistent with hypotheses 1 and 2). As we see from the available data ending in 1995, there has been a declining trend in the levels of violence during and after the Dayton agreement negotiations. Both Figure 2 and Table 10 suggest that conflict abates by 1995.

TABLE 10
Goldstein score of conflict events, Bosnia, 09/1995–12/1995

Variable	Time periods	Mean	Standard deviation
Goldstein conflict and cooperation score	4	–561	664.532

Although we do not have event data beyond the end of 1995, since 1996 Bosnia has been relatively stable with low levels of violence. The conflict eventually was brought closer to settlement as the external actors towards the end of 1995 tried to address issues and concerns critical for all three fighting parties in Bosnia and engage them in active participation in peace-building efforts. After all parties had agreed on the basic parameters of the Dayton peace agreement, NATO's multinational implementation force (IFOR) had a one-year military mandate with concrete goals to establish a secure environment. Once a secure environment was established, IGOs and NGOs (such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) were allowed to develop the civilian component of the operation. Once IFOR's mission was completed, the Stabilization force (SFOR) under the UN Security Council Resolution 1088 was authorized to continue IFOR's role. SFOR actively participated with international organizations, and national and local groups. Eight years after the Paris Treaty (1996), SFOR and the civilian component of the humanitarian intervention have been successful in preserving a secure environment.

The local population has attached a higher value to the international reconstruction efforts than was the case in the early phases of the conflict. The time and the effort invested have changed attitudes fundamentally, as witnessed in the willingness of all three communities to collaborate with international organizations and the International Criminal Court in the trial of crimes against humanity (consistent with hypotheses 1 and 2). Despite persistent economic difficulties and the problems related to the transition from a war-torn former planned economy to a free market economy, both at the political and the economic level there are clear signs of slow but steady progress and normalization in relations between the local factions (Domin, 2001a, b). Although concerns of the sustainability of the currently secure environment after the departure of SFOR remain, the aspiration of Bosnia and the other former Yugoslavian Republics to be admitted in the enlarged European Union can provide a strong motivation for the three communities to coexist and cooperate (i.e. Slovenia has been a member since May 2004, Croatia starts negotiations to enter in 2007).

Four main reasons have helped to foster a stable peace in the case of Bosnia. First, in accordance with hypothesis 3, after August of 1995 the intervening parties applied consistent policies that were carefully planned in advance and implemented, rather than uncoordinated responses to local events. Second, even though the policy of partition that *de facto* followed

the Dayton agreement (1995) and the Treaty of Paris (1996) has encroached upon the rights of people to return to the areas in which they used to live, partition can create conditions of trust and stability in the region if the majority of the local population are essentially satisfied with the final outcome, which lends support for hypotheses 1 and 2. Under certain conditions, partitions help address the problem of commitment by authorities, which many hold often to perpetuate communal conflicts (Lake and Rothchild, 1998; Fearon, 1998; Sisk, 1999). People choose to live in areas where they trust the local authorities. Third, the longer peace is preserved in a war-torn region, the better are the chances for long-term stability, as our application of cognitive dissonance theory suggests. Fourth, after the Dayton agreement, recent developments show that at least in the issue of war crimes tribunals, encouraging steps have been taken to build institutions and normalize the relations among the three groups by both SFOR (the NATO sponsored military operation) and the local governments.

Sisk (1999: 99) argues that the case of Bosnia attests to how mediation and interventions can only have a limited impact. Sisk argues that the local leaders whom the intervening parties choose can often have a detrimental impact on the motivation of local populations. Depending on the coherence of different groups in a country, good power-sharing measures should both strengthen the position of moderates and accommodate hardliners (Sisk, 1999: xi). External actors, however, often play up certain political leaders and place a great deal of confidence in political organizations or institutions that fit with their own political beliefs and aspirations, even if these lack widespread support in the local population. The paradoxical outcome noted by Sisk stems from misunderstandings of the local social context and failure to achieve constructive cooperation with the local populations.

The difference in terms of the intervention policies in Bosnia and Somalia was that the bombing campaign in Bosnia was immediately followed by negotiations that included the leaders of the three ethnic/religious groups. During the negotiations the American negotiator Richard Holbrooke brought to the negotiation table the leaders of all parties who were active participants in the conflict (Holbrooke, 1998). In his book *To End a War*, Holbrooke described how he pushed aside his personal feelings for and perceptions of the 'blood thirsty' leaders of the three ethnic/religious groups and the former President of Yugoslavia, Milosevic, to achieve a lasting agreement. An example that illustrates how critical it is to involve the local population is the fact that Holbrooke allowed the Bosnian Serbs to use the name of 'Republika Srpska' despite its 'bloody' undertones. Holbrooke was vehemently attacked for this decision. Nevertheless, this insertion might have actually proved essential in bringing Bosnian Serbs on board and motivating them to cooperate with the other two groups.

Conclusion

Our research has explored to what extent policies that involve the local population can be applied to humanitarian interventions under different

contexts and situations. Using cognitive dissonance theory we develop three hypotheses regarding the role of the local population and its interaction with external actors in the post-intervention peace-building process. We argue that local participation is a necessary ingredient to reach a successful settlement that will last. Looking at the cases of Somalia from 1987 to 1997 and Bosnia from 1991 until 1996 we juxtapose the monthly incidents of violence to attempts by the UN and other intervening actors to bring local leaders into the peace-building process. In real-life interventions we cannot rely on the experimental designs used by psychology. However, the event data analysis strongly corroborates our argument that during periods where the local population is even partially involved in the intervention process, the prospects for a long-lasting settlement increase.

In future research we hope to be able to evaluate whether cognitive dissonance theory can account for the conditions under which populations in target countries react in particular ways through survey research and public opinion polls recording the beliefs and actions of the local population towards the intervening parties. In this sense, Iraq provides an interesting test case with large variations in strategies and outcomes at the local level. An article in the *New York Times* on a success story in reconstruction efforts in Northern Iraq illustrates the relevance of our research question to both practitioners and students of future interventions and peacekeeping operations (see Gordon, 2003). Major General David H. Petraeus, commander of the US Army's 101st Airborne Division, successfully restored trade with Syria by brokering an agreement involving local leaders and Iraqi customs officials. This in turn has generated substantial revenue used to finance other reconstruction projects in the region. The success of Petraeus's efforts indicates the necessity of integrating local influential figures in the post-conflict reconstruction process, even if these formerly may have been members of the Baath Party.

This study provides insights for how external interventions can be designed to be more effective and better able to produce a stable peace. This is the first step in building an extensive data set on local population involvement in humanitarian interventions that will fill a gap in the existing literature of conflict resolution. Future research should look at a large numbers of interventions to draw more general conclusions and policy implications that can be of interest to researchers, practitioners and policy advocates.

Notes

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1. In this article, we do not seek to evaluate the legitimacy of external interventions. See Falk (1996) for discussion of the evolution of the status of interstate interventions in contending approaches to international law.
2. The recognition of all parties as legitimate participants is probably the most important condition for a successful peace-keeping operation. This requirement

stems from Human Rights Theory and the literature on conflict resolution, where conflict resolution is defined as a situation where conflicting parties enter into an agreement recognizing each other's right to exist (Burrows, 1996; Wallensteen, 2002).

3. In the context of cognitive dissonance, belief and attitudes represent the state of mind or disposition of an individual. Behavior is the result of a person's reaction to a situation, and/or group and individual interaction. Beliefs and attitudes shape individual behaviour and the ways individuals interact with their surroundings. Group behavior is an extension of individual behavior; but group dynamics can often alter or reinforce individual behaviour.

4. Traditional persuasion theory suggests that attitudes cause behaviour. Festinger and subsequent experimental research strongly suggest that the direction of causality often runs in the opposite direction.

5. Our argument is not that cooperation with local elites is the only form of meaningful local participation. However, in peace-building processes local elites will pose as representatives of the population at large. We do not assume that local elites necessarily represent the interests or goals of the whole or a majority of the local population, rather the theory implies that locals are more likely to trust someone from their own background than outside leaders imposed by the interveners.

6. Somalia and Bosnia are often used for comparison in the study of humanitarian interventions, as both are often seen as exemplifying the disastrous effects of well-intended humanitarian interventions. For an extended discussion of the value of comparing these cases, see Weiss and Collins (2000) and Pieterse (1997).

7. Although we recognize that several sub-groups with partly competing goals can be identified in each of these cases, in this article we focus on the target state as an aggregate. Our interest is to ascertain whether intervening forces include locals at all in peace-building processes rather than whether they include individual groups.

8. Menkhaus and Ortmayer (1995: 13–15) note that Aideed and UNOSOM had a complicated relationship, where both sides emanated mistrust and misperceived the actions of the other. Both the UN and the USA rejected alternative responses to the murder of the Pakistani peace-keepers, leaving direct confrontation as the only choice. Even then, the 3 October operation was directly orchestrated by the USA without any UN involvement or consultation (Menkhaus and Ortmayer, 1995: 22).

9. The contact group countries were USA, UK, France, Germany and Russia.

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